

MONTANA CAREER RESOURCE NETWORK CONNECTIONS

September 2008

What's Inside?

Montana College Access Network

Page 2

The Be Real Game Train-the-Trainer Workshop

Page 3

New Feature on MCRN Website

Page 3

SAF Agreements for MCIS Access

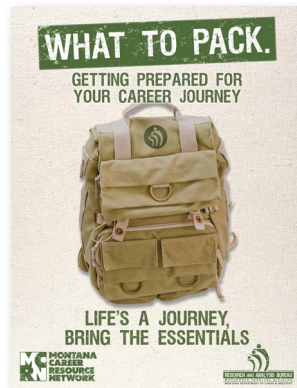
Page 3

MCIS: What's New for 2008?

Page 4

Coming Soon from MCRN

Page 6



What to Pack: Getting Ready for Your Career Journey

by Casey Kyler-West

School clothes \$500; school supplies \$100; knowing your middle school student is on the right track to accomplish their dreams...priceless.

This is the time of year that parents are gleefully getting their children ready to go back to school. But there's more to getting ready for school than going on the annual school shopping trip to buy clothes and school supplies. With all the changes in the workforce and new opportunities on the horizon, parents and students need to make sure they're ready for what the future holds.

A new publication produced by Montana's Career Resource Network of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau, *What to Pack*, is specifically tailored to meet the needs of middle school students. Now you might be thinking isn't that a little early for kids to be thinking about the rest of their lives? But this publication isn't designed to set a specific career track for students, it's designed so that students can start thinking about what interests them and how those interests could lead to a career down the road as they prepare for their transition into high school.

What to Pack takes a look at several different things. First and foremost it does a side-by-side comparison of high school graduation requirements and entrance requirements into Montana's University System. The purpose of this is to help middle school students plan what they're going to take in high school. Most students don't start thinking about college requirements until their junior or senior year and by then it may be too late to take the necessary classes to get into the college they want.

Money is another topic covered in *What to Pack*. Students can look at how much money they need to make in order to afford the kind of lifestyle they want to live. While we all know money isn't everything, a budget worksheet helps students break down their budget by incorporating daily living expenses like rent, utilities, car payments, school loans, fixed expenses like cable, food and Internet service, and other expenses that can come up. Then students can look at what kind of jobs will support their lifestyle. Governor Brian Schweitzer says, "There is a connection between quality education and economic success. The best paying jobs today and in the future require ever-increasing skills and knowledge; we need to help our Montana kids become students for life."

What to Pack (continued from page 1)

Once students see whether or not their career interest can support their lifestyle, they can find out just how much education they need for a particular career. They can also take a look at what type of personality they have and what careers go along with their personality. *What to Pack* looks at five different personality types: artistic, conventional, enterprising, investigative, realistic and social. Under each type of personality it lists what types of jobs fit those personalities. For example, architects and graphic designers can be found under artistic; accountants and tellers can be found under conventional and so on.

What to Pack is just one of the many resources available for students through the Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau. Other publications and resources include the Montana Career Information

System's *MCIS Junior Workbook*; *Who Needs Math*; *Who Needs Science*; *Career Peaks* (an activity book geared towards students in kindergarten through second grade); *Jacob and Emily Skip School: A Career Clusters Workbook*; and several more.

To Download *What to Pack* or any of the other resources, go to www.ourfactsyourfuture.com. You'll find *What to Pack* in the publications section, under the "Career Publications" heading. The other publications can be found by clicking on the Career Resource Network Tab, then clicking on MCRN Publications. To order a printed copy of any of the publications, call the Research and Analysis Bureau at (406) 444-2430 or toll free at (800) 541-3904, write to us at P.O. Box 1728, Helena, MT 59624-1728 or e-mail us at: webmasterrad@mt.gov.



Montana College Access Network: Reaching Students Across Big Sky Country, Together

While Montana's wide open spaces are conducive to cattle and cowboys, they present a substantial obstacle for students and parents seeking resources for postsecondary education, and conversely, for teachers, counselors and programs working to promote educational opportunities across the state.

In response to these challenges, a growing group of college access programs has banded together to form the Montana College Access Network.

"Montana is home to many individuals and groups dedicated to supporting and encouraging students to follow their dreams of attaining postsecondary education," said Kelly Chapman, executive vice president of Foundation Activities for nonprofit Student Assistance Foundation and coordinator of the Montana College Access Network.

"While our individual programs have distinctive features, our commonality is our college access missions. By working together, we can better coordinate our work and ensure that our individual programs and messages reach more Montana students," she continued.

The national KnowHow2Go campaign is one of the first projects the network has taken on together. The campaign's four main themes – be a pain (in a good way), push yourself, find the right fit, and get your hands on some cash – apply to all of the programs and outreach offered by current network members.

Groups including Montana GEAR UP, Montana TRIO/ASPIRE, Montana Post Secondary Educational Opportunities Council, Montana Career Resource Network, and more have joined the Montana College Access Network and are collaborating to spread the KnowHow2Go campaign throughout the state.

Educators and other professionals involved with the network have easy access to KnowHow2Go campaign materials including the dynamic "Take the Tough Classes" public service announcements, posters, bookmarks, wristbands and more.

One of the tools available through the Montana College Access Network is a social networking site through Ning.

"It's like Facebook for people involved in education," Chapman said, adding that anyone can join. "Members can send each other messages, post event information, share articles, ask questions and much more. It narrows the gap, allowing opportunity for seamless, productive communication."

Other plans for the Montana College Access Network include monthly newsletters and Webinars addressing education issues affecting students and educators in Montana.

For more information about the Montana College Access Network, contact Kelly Chapman at (406) 495-7390. To join the social networking page, go to www.KnowHow2GoMontana.ning.com.

The Be Real Game Train-the-Trainer Workshop

Montana Career Resource Network, along with the Student Assistance Foundation and Gear Up, is offering a Train-the-Trainer Workshop for the Be Real Game to Montana educators. The **Be Real Game** shows students in **Grades 9 and 10** how a person's career path is built upon everyday choices and decisions, which start in childhood and encompass every area of life including family, friends, education, recreational activities, lifestyle choices, community involvement, and labor market conditions. Students begin by role-playing a high school student and follow their career paths into adulthood, experiencing a variety of employment, unemployment, and family situations. Students explore the importance of transferable skills, self-knowledge, lifelong learning, and career planning. They are exposed to dozens of occupational possibilities and encouraged to actively pursue their dreams. The Be Real Game is a great addition to any Family and Consumer Science Class.

The Train-the-Trainer Workshop will walk participants through the Be Real Game process, as well as several of the activities. Participants will then be able to put the Be Real Game to work in their classrooms.

Vicki Gray, a master-level Real Game trainer from New York will be the trainer. All participants will benefit from her years of valuable experience and training techniques.

New Feature on MCRN Website

The Research & Analysis Bureau has been busy developing online training for Job Service staff on labor market information and the SKILLS program in MCIS. We are making this online SKILLS training available on our website for teachers and counselors. There are two lessons currently available; Setting Up My CIS Portfolio and Introduction to Skills – Getting Started. Learn how to use the SKILLS worksheet, cards, and program, and how to interpret the results. Since the training was developed for individuals working with job seekers it refers to customers/clients. The same process can be used with students so where ever the lesson refers to customers or clients just think "students." After viewing the lessons you will be able to instruct students in setting up a portfolio in MCIS and using the SKILLS program.

We hope you find this online training beneficial. More MCIS online training will be developed in the future and we'll keep you informed when new lessons become available.

To access these lessons go to www.ourfactsyourfuture.org and click on the Career Resource Network tab. The lessons will be on the teacher/counselor page.

This workshop will take place in Billings, MT on September 29-30, 2008 at MSU-Billings. For more information or to register for training, contact Donetta Clark or Shaunda Hildebrand at 1-800-541-3904.

Testimonials:

Students:

"I was surprised at how this program is very involving and fun! The way it is organized is pure genius! More programs and activities should be like this." *(10th Grade Student)*

"I learned that balancing a budget can be tough; money doesn't go as far as I thought. It's expensive to have kids!" *(10th Grade Student)*

Teachers:

"This is the best way I have had for teaching the concept of budgeting. Good work!" *(9th Grade Teacher)*

"A great program. I've learned a lot, and plan to use it in the fall in two classes. It is an answer to what I have wanted to teach for a long time, and it's all in one program and life-like." *(10th Grade Teacher)*

Counselors:

"I look forward to working with the teachers and students with this program. The experience is positive, and fun, for all of us. The students actually want to talk with me, at length, about career issues I've had trouble getting their attention in the past. Hat's off to the people who created this outstanding new resource."

"It can be hard to motivate students to do career planning, and a real challenge to get teachers to make time for career issues. With this program in our school, students and teachers want to discuss career themes. It gets students exploring options, on their own, talking with their parents, and using other resources in the career center."

SAF Agreements for MCIS Access

Grant agreement forms for use of MCIS free of charge, thanks to the Student Assistance Foundation (SAF), are in the mail. Please complete and return the forms so you can have access or continue to have access to the most comprehensive career information system available to students.

This year MCRN will be changing the administrative passwords to accounts so if you don't complete and send in the grant agreement form you will no longer be able to access MCIS through your school's site license.

If you have any questions or need a form, please call Donetta Clark at 406-444-7019 or 1-800-541-3904.

MCRN CONNECTIONS

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MCIS MONTANA CAREER INFORMATION SYSTEM

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2008?

*Available after October 1st (Items marked with * are MCIS Jr. enhancements as well)*

HOME PAGE

- *Global Search from CIS home page.
- *Messages sent by administrators or staff (via the CIS Administration Tool) will appear in the Welcome section (upper right).
- *Return To - A new button with drop down list at the top of information screens that takes you right back to the results of any assessment or sort from your current session.

FINANCIAL AID

New scholarships added.

SCHOOLS

Expanded content in these areas:

- Contact people and their contact information
- Enrollment information about undergraduate and graduate students
- Amount and types of financial aid awarded to freshman and undergraduates
- Application requirements
- Factors considered by schools when evaluating applicants
- Graduation requirements
- Sports
- Graduate study
- New display which includes tables for sports, enrollment, and tuition information. Also, new bullet lists and an overall cleaner appearance.

TUTORIALS

- * Online tutorials and support materials.
Site Administration Tool

OCCUPATIONS

Ten additional "new and emerging" occupations:

- Acupuncturists
- Automobile Electronics Installers
- Baristas
- Caterers
- Midwives
- Naturopathic Physicians
- Nurse Practitioners
- Professional Bloggers and Podcasters
- Professional Organizers
- Winemakers

*Nine additional occupations for JR:

- Airplane Assemblers
- Orthotic and Prosthetic Specialists
- Ship Pilots
- Physical Therapist Aides
- Medical Equipment Preparers
- Animators and Multimedia Artists
- Computer, ATM, and Office Machine Repairers
- Biomedical Engineers
- Skin Care Specialists

PORTFOLIO

CIS Favorites - results from assessments (i.e., IDEAS, Interest Profiler, Work Importance Locator, and Career Cluster Inventory) will display on the print out.

CIS Favorites - a new link, Report, appears in the title bar. This is the link for the combined report to show occupations occurring on multiple sort/assessment lists.

* Course Plan - users can select courses offered by their school if the school has uploaded a list.

SORTS AND ASSESSMENTS (except SKILLS)

A "compare" view lets you view all the information for two occupations or schools side-by-side, right on your results lists.

REAL WORLD INTERVIEWS

* **Sixteen new Real World Interviews.**

- Appraisers and Assessors
- Choreographers
- Computer Systems Analysts
- Employment Recruiters
- Fine Artists
- Geographers
- Interpreters and Translators
- Job Benefits and Analysis Specialists
- Massage Therapists
- Optometrists
- Public Health Educators
- Quality Control Inspector
- School Bus Drivers
- Ship Captains and Mates
- Social and Community Service Managers
- Special Education Teachers

REPORTS

* **Site Usage and Component Usage** are now two separate reports. Site Usage also includes "Portfolios created during the selected time period".

* **Group Reports** - the Administrator or Staff can flag groups that they administer (see Group Data Maintenance and then Members). The "administered" groups appear at the top of the drop down list for groups.

* **Individual Portfolios** - In all cases in which a list of accounts is generated we are using a "grid view" to display the results. You can click on any column header to order the list by the relevant data field (i.e., Last Use) and order by ascending or descending order. The Filter option (i.e., text box) will search for matching text on any of the relevant text fields (i.e., all but Last Use date). When you view an individual portfolio's Favorites, the assessment results will display. This is the same view that the user sees when they view their Favorites. If you do a Search by last name, the search criteria will appear at the top of the page.

KEEP THAT JOB

First module to have PDF's that are fillable, saveable, and accessible for CIS users who use screen readers.

DATA MAINTENANCE

There are several additions to the data maintenance section.

* **Grid Views** are used to display all Staff, Groups, Portfolios, and Messages.

* **Groups** - Administrators and Staff can flag groups that they administer.

* **Portfolios** - Additional functionality including the ability to:

Export - export selected portfolios to an Excel spreadsheet. This includes all the "personal" information in the portfolio.

Print - the information in grid view.

Send message - Administrators and Staff can send messages to one or more users.

* **Messages** - Administrators and Staff can monitor and manage messages they have sent.

* **Upload Portfolios** - batch create portfolios using an Excel template. Only new portfolios should be included in the spreadsheet. The downloaded template will not include any entries.

* **Upload Courses** - upload courses to be displayed in the Course Planner using an Excel template. The template will include all the courses currently uploaded and any subsequent uploads will replace the current set of courses.

* **Portfolio Policy** - If a site chooses "always opt in," new users will see a different message the first time they log in.



**MONTANA CAREER
RESOURCE NETWORK**
www.ourfactsyourfuture.org

Coming Soon from MCRN

Montana Career Guide 2008 - The 2008 Montana Career Guide will be mailed to all Montana high schools to be distributed to all sophomores in early October. The Career Guide is an essential resource for anyone needing career information, including resume writing, searching and interviewing for jobs, post-secondary education and training, and occupational information such as wages, education requirements, and annual openings. The Career Guide will also be available for download at www.ourfactsyourfuture.org. For more information or to request a printed copy, please contact Donetta Clark at 1-800-541-3904.

MCIS Junior Workbook - We will be revising the MCIS Junior Workbooks based on the latest version of MCIS Junior, which is scheduled for an October 1st release.

Career Heroes

MCRN is pleased to announce the Fall 2008 release of our exciting new career workbook for 3rd and 4th grade students: Career Heroes. Designed to familiarize grade schoolers with the concept of Career Clusters, Career Heroes takes the concept of trading card games, and translates it into the world of work, highlighting specific occupations with colorful character cards. The workbook also includes a variety of classroom activities to get children excited to learn about careers. Career Heroes will be crosswalked to Montana's Content Standards in order to help teachers and counselors easily identify the standards met by utilizing the workbooks in their classrooms.



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